



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director

May 20, 2010

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**SUBJECT: UNMET NEEDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010-2011**

The Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Department of Regional Planning (DRP) Proposed Base Budget reflects our efforts to avoid staff and program reductions by significantly curtailing services and supplies, and overtime. These reductions were due primarily to increases in employee benefits, adjustment in salaries and our revenue shortfall. The reduced revenue was due to the slowed economy and housing slowdown. A net decrease of \$1.42 million in Net County Cost was necessary to address this structural deficit.

The DRP is submitting its unmet needs and funding requirements for Fiscal Year 2010-2011. These unmet needs will, if funded, enable the department to provide improved levels of service for the Board of Supervisors, Regional Planning Commission, unincorporated communities, landowners, and the general public. The programs will affect every supervisorial district and conform to our own strategic plan goals and objectives, namely, neighborhoods and sustainable communities, green development, and economic strength. Many programs listed for funding will help us to further the purposes of the department as listed in the appendix of the DRP strategic plan "what we do".

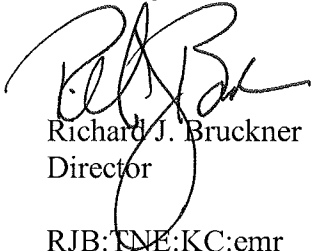
The list of unmet needs (Attachment A) summarizes the program descriptions, additional positions, and estimated financial requirements for the following programs (in order of priority):

1. Restoration of Structural Deficit and Improved Employee Development (\$1,058,000)
2. General Plan/Antelope Valley Plan EIR Update (\$560,000)
3. Implementation of Departmental Human Resources Audit – Return to Work Program (\$205,000)
4. Zoning Ordinance Update Program Implementation (\$240,000)
5. Enhanced Enforcement Services and Productivity (\$230,000)
6. Geographic Information Systems Web Applications for Improved Permit Processing (\$150,000)
7. Landfill Solid Waste Facility Monitoring and CSD Implementation (\$120,000)
8. Renovation of Work Space and Improved Field Offices (\$142,000)
9. Customer Care at the Public Counter – LDCC (\$80,000)

10. Green Building Program Outreach and Legislative Analysis (\$130,000)
11. Airport Land Use (\$468,000)
12. Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District (CSD) Update (\$120,000)
13. Significant Ecological Areas Siting and Development Guidelines (\$150,000)

We are confident that these programs will improve customer service, provide community outreach, and enhance decision making throughout the County. We strongly recommend your consideration and funding of these critical unmet needs listed herein for next fiscal year. Should you require additional information regarding any of these programs, please contact me at (213) 974-6401 or Jon Sanabria, Chief Deputy Director of Planning, at (213) 974-6405.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director

RJB:TNE:KC:emr

Enclosure

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer  
Andrea Sheridan Ordin, County Counsel  
Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

**DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING  
FY 2010-11  
UNMET NEEDS**

	<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Restoration of Structural Deficit and Improved Employee Development.</b>	<b>\$1,058,000</b>	<b>1.0</b>

One (1.0) Information Technology (IT) position and \$952,000 from services and supplies were deleted from the FY 10-11 budget due to a structural deficit caused by an increase in employee benefits, a reduction in salary savings, a decrease in overtime and a decrease in revenue. The IT position will perform duties related to the Hearing Room including coordinating with all Department sections and the Commission Secretary the assembly and preparation of presentation materials for weekly public meetings at the Regional Planning Commission, Hearing Officer and in communities; overseeing facilitations of presentation and operate all related A/V technology at public meetings; and coordinating with the Chief Executive Office (CEO), County channel and media outlets to ensure connectivity between Hearing Room and County webcasting services.

The restoration of the services and supplies would allow staff to procure services and supplies primarily for consultant services, information technology services, office expense and travel/training services. Consultant costs would be restored to work on many ongoing projects such as the Zoning Ordinance Update Program, Antelope Valley Area Plan Update, and on-going Housing programs such as the Infrastructure Study, Transit Oriented District (TOD) Infrastructure Study, and Inclusionary Housing Technical Feasibility.

	<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>2.</b>	<b>General Plan/Antelope Valley Area Plan EIR Update</b>	<b>\$560,000</b>	<b>2.0</b>

The General Plan Update, which is a project that has taken over two decades to complete, needs to be revised to ensure that it meets new climate change mandates, addresses lessons learned from the implementation of the adopted General Plan, and has a framework strong enough to set the foundation for future long-term implementation efforts, such as community and area plans.

As mandated by Section 65103 of the Government code, the Department must update the Antelope Valley Area Plan as it was last updated in 1986. This effort has been underway since Autumn 2007 and funding is necessary to complete the update in a timely manner. Due to the large size of the Valley and the numerous physical hazards and environmental resources, an EIR will be required in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff does not have the qualifications or expertise to prepare the EIR without consultant assistance. One-time consultant services will be needed to complete the EIR.

	<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Implementation of Departmental Human Resources Audit - Return to Work Program</b>	<b>\$205,000</b>	<b>2.0</b>

An additional two (2.0) positions is necessary to effectively manage the full complement of our Worker's Compensation, Return-to-Work and discipline cases from beginning to end. Due to the increasingly technical nature of Human Resources, especially in the Worker's Compensation/Disability arena, the Department of Human Resources has designated that all Return-to-Work programs/functions be coordinated by staff at the level of Senior Departmental Personnel Technician (Sr. DPT) or higher in addition to a Senior Typist Clerk to provide clerical assistance.

The Sr. DPT will report directly to the Departmental Human Resources Manager and will be responsible for performing highly technical and complex human resources functions which will require a thorough knowledge of Civil Service Rules, salary and benefit provisions of the County Code, Interpretive Manual for County Pay and Benefit Provisions, salary and benefit operations and departmental policies and procedures, and possess the necessary skills and abilities to provide more accurate consultative services and information to management, employees, personnel staff and the public. In addition, the position will provide technical guidance to lower level personnel staff concerning recruitment and selections and classification matter, and supervise the human resources division in the absence of the Departmental Human Resources Manager I.

	<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Zoning Ordinance Update Program (ZOUP) Implementation</b>	<b>\$240,000</b>	<b>2.0</b>

The ZOUP is to implement the new General Plan. However, as the General Plan (GP) is not being completed as scheduled, the ZOUP Project will need to be approached differently to complete the project as proposed. ZOUP will now be completed in two segments or a two-step process. The first step is a Technical Update; the second is a Zoning Consistency analysis. Although the consultant has agreed to re-write portions of their contract so there will be no additional fees due to them, there will be additional work for Ordinance Studies staff. A ZOUP Focus Group is being formed, consisting of experienced members from each Division who will be working on reviewing and redlining the draft ordinance. Ordinance Studies staff will need to Chair this group. When the second phase begins staff will need to work closely with GP staff to ensure GP consistency in ZOUP. Outreach will be required twice; once for the Technical Update, with more intense outreach required for the zoning consistency portion. Although this project has already begun, the unmet needs are the additional personnel required to complete the job within the proposed timeline.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>5. Enhanced Enforcement Services and Productivity</b>	<b>\$230,000</b>	<b>2.0</b>

The community is demanding more constant and effective enforcement and staff are faced with increased collateral duties and special projects. Enhancement of zoning enforcement services and productivity requires the addition of two (2.0) additional positions to respond to all reports of zoning violations in a timely manner, prepare notices of violation, prepare staff reports for appeals, and prepare summary reports for criminal complaints. One (1.0) position will be assigned to the Antelope Valley Field Office, which has available space and a workstation to accommodate the additional staff. No major expense or resources are required to accommodate the new employee at the Field Office. One (1.0) additional position will be assigned to the San Gabriel Valley area and will be stationed at the Downtown Office. No major resources will be required as existing office space exist at the downtown office to accommodate the new employee. Meeting this unmet need will ensure responsiveness to outstanding violations, increase productivity, enhance response time to reports of zoning violations, increase staff moral and aid the Section in meeting the Department's Service Excellence and Organizational Effectiveness Strategic Goals

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>6. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Web Applications for Improved Permit Processing</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Consulting services will be required to assist with the update of our various mapping applications to ArcGIS Servicer based applications (from ArcIMS). Current applications are still working but have had maintenance issues over the years and we are limited by the enhancements that can be offered. It is necessary to overhaul the systems and re-deploy using the latest ArcGIS Server and web-based technologies. Arc GIS Server was introduced in 2006 and has more functionality available. Web-based technologies are being integrated to add widgets. This would provide contract work for application development and support where necessary.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>7. Landfill Solid Waste Facility Monitoring and CSD Implementation</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>1.0</b>

The review and interpretation of CSDs, landfill cases, and Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) are extremely technical and often complicated. The CSDs have multiple layers of regulations with a variety of community wide, zone specific and area specific development standards, guidelines, and use regulations that a planner must review to ensure conformance. The majority of the landfill cases require follow up work such as frequent attendance at community meetings, preparation of agendas and coordination with other departments and agencies, which is often expected by the planning commission and the Board of Supervisors. The addition of one (1.0) position will be dedicated to reviewing and processing zoning cases that involved CSDs and monitoring landfill and MRF cases to ensure compliance with conditions in addition to attending regular scheduled meetings.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>8. Renovation of Work Space and Improved Field Offices</b>	<b>\$142,000</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Regional Planning requires renovation of the thirteenth floor women's restroom and the tenth floor file room of the Hall of Records (HOR). Renovation of the thirteenth floor women's restroom in the HOR will meet the minimum requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which includes an enlarged entry, enlarged stall doors, and lower sinks and paper towel dispensers. The tenth floor file room will be converted to additional office space, which will provide space for eight additional workstations.

In order to provide better customer service to constituents and the communities we serve, we are requesting additional office space for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (West Athens-Westmont) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Calabasas) Supervisorial Districts within the existing Public Works Building and Safety Offices. This will provide additional office space for zoning enforcement to provide better services which is more convenient for the constituent and will create improved collaboration with Public Works Building and Safety.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>9. Customer Care at the Public Counter - LDCC</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>	<b>1.0</b>

The Land Development Coordinating Center (LDCC) is typically the first contact the residents of the unincorporated area have with the Department of Regional Planning. Constituents wishing to improve their properties contact LDCC to seek information regarding what they are allowed to do and what options they have. The LDCC responds to thousands of phone calls and in-person questions on a yearly basis. The implication of not fulfilling this unmet need is great delays and frustration for our customers and will result in an adversarial relationship with the public. Providing adequate phone coverage is especially a challenge with the current staffing. The LDCC often receives complaints from the public regarding long wait time on the phone and lack of response. The LDCC needs additional staff to be able to provide the necessary coverage both on the phone and at the public counter.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>10. Green Building Program Outreach and Legislative Analysis</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>	<b>1.0</b>

The Green Building Program was approved by the Board of Supervisors in November 2008 and to implement this program, one (1.0) additional position is required to provide staff education as well as outreach. Although the Ordinances went into effect on January 1, 2009, the second-tier, or the third-party requirements will go into effect on January 1, 2010. Outreach needs to include the preparation of brochures; forms and other informational materials to be used by staff and applicants when they come into either the Planning or Building and Safety offices.

This position will also provide legislative analysis which will include: 1) Review state and federal legislations pertaining to land use, planning, and environmental regulations, make related recommendations, propose new related recommendations, and propose new state and federal legislation as necessary to meet department and county needs; 2) Monitor and ensure compliance of Zoning Ordinance amendments as necessary; and 3) update the Regional Planning Commission on legislation, analysis, and related ordinance amendments.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>11. Airport Land Use</b>	<b>\$468,000</b>	<b>2.0</b>

The principal responsibilities of this new program are mandated by Section 21670 et Seq. of the Public Utilities Code. The new program would provide adequate staffing to complete aviation case reviews, provide on-going consultations and to begin work on updating the Los Angeles County Airport Land Use Plan and the compatibility plans for 14 of the County's 15 public use airports. The additional staff will develop one plan per year and conduct the associated general plan consistency review in that same year. Development of airport land use consistency plans requires coordination with the affected jurisdictions and community outreach.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>12. Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District (CSD) Update</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	<b>1.0</b>

Complete the CSD to fully implement the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Net County Cost</i>	<i>Budgeted Positions</i>
<b>13. Significant Ecological Areas (SEA) Siting and Development Guidelines</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>0.0</b>

The SEAs Siting and Development Guidelines Project will be initiated to provide guidance in the process of considering development in SEAs. This project is necessary to enhance the understanding and certainty of the development process within the boundaries of SEAs. The Guidelines will be developed in conjunction with staff, SEATAC, state Fish and Game data, and federal Fish and Wildlife data to establish models and recommendations for acceptable development in SEAs. The Guidelines will assist SEATAC, developers, land owners, and other concerned stakeholders in assessing development potential in SEAs.